

THE Pacific Commercial Advertiser

A MORNING PAPER.

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JAPANESE COMMERCIAL METHODS.

While the visit of the Japanese Chambers of Commerce to the United States will be widely instructive to them, there is nothing that they could acquire from it which the business community of Japan needs more to learn than a respect for the obligations of contracts. Of commercial morality the Japanese have less, it is said, than any other civilized nation, a circumstance partly arising from the old feudal contempt for trade, thus lowering the station of tradesmen, and partly from the conception, not unknown elsewhere, that the successful man is the one who hoodwinks his fellows.

Some years ago the men of light and leading in Japan realized this grave defect of the national character and sought to remedy it through the colleges. University chairs of commercial morality were endowed, but as few graduates went into mercantile pursuits the result was not appreciable in the business life of Japanese communities. At any rate the condition is such that the Japanese Minister of Justice, in speaking, a few weeks ago on the Japan Sugar Refinery scandal, felt free to say:

Not only is the failure of the company the outcome of the morality of its directors, but the standard of morality of Japanese business men in general is so low that, unless reformed, no guarantee can be given against the recurrence of similar affairs.

Furthermore, Japanese credit among foreigners will practically be reduced to zero and the future of the country will become a matter of deep anxiety. I earnestly hope that those concerned will reflect on this point and strive to raise their standard of morality.

Again, the Jiji, one of the leading Tokyo papers, having a great reputation for conservative opinion, is quoted as saying:

We deplore the fact that the so-called clever and sagacious business men of nowadays are lacking in the virtue of honesty. Our society of every description seems to disregard the value of honesty. Honest people are looked down upon as cowards, stupid, and a slow sort of fellows.

Travelers in Japan find it wisest, when they buy silks or art goods of native dealers, to oversee the packing themselves, otherwise they are likely to get an inferior grade of merchandise. It is most dangerous, at all times, to buy by sample or to take anything for granted. Tourists save money by buying of European dealers at the large centers and leaving them to do the original purchasing from the Japanese.

It would be pharisaical to say that nothing of this kind happens in the United States or Europe; but it is never done with the average approval of the community, as in Japan, nor are great successes in our mercantile life achieved by underhanded means. That "honesty is the best policy," is a standard belief in the American business world and everyone of the great commercial houses of the land has been built on a solid basis of rectitude—a fact illustrated by the intimate history of such houses as Marshall Field & Co., John Wanamaker, A. T. Stewart & Co., and so on, through a long and honorable list. The more the visiting Japanese merchants study such examples and the deeper they study them, the better for Japan's commercial ethics so far as they can shape them.

One of the many good influences which Hawaii is exercising on the Oriental mind—for these islands constitute a university in which Chinese, Japanese and other aliens have long been learning the best things which civilization has to offer—is seen in the improvement in mercantile ideals of Japanese business men who settle here. Our mercantile Japanese have a good reputation—a far better one than they would probably enjoy in their home environment. We hear few if any complaints about them. They do not throw up a contract which promises badly. Their goods are at least up to sample. In other words they have learned to do business in the standard American way. True, they may often charge too much, but that is a fault which is not bounded by national or racial lines. The point is that they have made themselves trusted—have acquired credit—have accepted the basic principles of civilized business; and thus shown the capacity, at least, of Japanese merchants at home to do as well. The particular example and incentive, so potent here, are wanting in the fatherland; but over there, the lesson of declining foreign trade in art products and silk, may be depended on, in the long run, to teach the same lesson. Foreigners will not always submit to be cheated and when they cease to buy, honesty will begin to make a very convincing appeal to the business classes of Japan.

COMING PORTUGUESE LABOR.

The plan to bring Portuguese here marks the abandonment, as we are assured, of the lazzaroni program. No more money will be spent on the Italian venture; instead, the kind of Latins that are known and appreciated in Hawaii will be imported.

Whether the mainland Portuguese will prove as acceptable as the insular ones is at least uncertain, but that they are better than the only kind of Italians that largely emigrate, the Sicilian, Calabrian and Neapolitan proletariat, admits of little doubt. It is some advantage, however, to get the islanders, with their simple village and farm habits and their dependable strain of Flemish blood; and, so far as we are aware, there is nothing to prevent the Immigration agent, Mr. Campbell, from recruiting them if he thinks best to do so.

There has been little visiting between the Kaiser and Francis Joseph, just enough to keep up the acquaintance. The Hapsburgs sat on the throne of the German people too long to be happy in the presence of the imperial Hohenzollerns; and though Germany and Austria-Hungary are in alliance, for reasons of state, the reigning houses do not easily fraternize. When the present Kaiser visited Vienna the first time a low barometer was noted; and when the visit, which was short, came to an end, the Austrian ruler was reported to have said: "When princes meet both of them should have some tact." It was a long time before the strenuous Kaiser came again. Now, after several years, he is making another call, but it is no more likely to be returned than were the former ones.

Several doctors, disturbed by the bogus gluten disclosures, have sent through their druggists for a supply of the pure product. Unadulterated gluten flour is worth 25 cents per pound at retail but the imitative kind here is on the market at ten and fifteen cents. It is not surprising to find how base an invention this is. A gentleman whose little son is afflicted with diabetes has been giving the stuff to the boy freely and wondering why the patient did not improve. As every ounce contained wheat flour in greater quantities than gluten, the father was simply poisoning the lad to add to the riches of a heartless manufacturer. The people charged with the enforcement of the Pure Food law have a distinct duty to perform towards the gluten fraud.

The accession oath which every English sovereign has to take is as offensive to Roman Catholics as the prayer for "Jews, Turks and Infidels" in the Anglican ritual is to the King's Hebrew subjects. It has no other moral right to be administered in this day and age than that which comes from following ancient precedent. Mr. Redmond, in his efforts to eliminate the relics of bigotry in the British system of government, deserves the sympathy of all free minds.

This paper prefers that further letters concerning Mr. Lightfoot or others openly connected with the strike, be published, if at all, with the signatures of the writers. Mr. Lightfoot has expressed himself personally and those who criticize his methods should do the same. This is merely fair play and is calculated to reduce the acerbity which an anonymous or partly anonymous discussion of the labor strike and its personal phases would be likely to create.

Italy can not afford to build Dreadnoughts, but she must be in fashion, come what may. The very word Dreadnought is becoming synonymous with deficits in public treasuries. That type of warship is not only enormously costly, but it is relegating a billion dollars' worth of other vessels to the scrap heap.

Young men must have their fling but if Kermit Roosevelt wants his head better wait until he gets out of the jungle. Seeing the elephant at night in that quarter is not what it is on Broadway.

Eight millions is a large sum for even a Sultan to keep in his palace but it must be remembered that Abdul Hamid had serious domestic expenses.

The French government handles this strike better than it did the other one.

JAPANESE MASS MEETING BACKS UP STRIKERS

(Continued from Page One.)

all of us are willing and ready to declare off the strike and return to work immediately.

Very respectfully yours,
COMMITTEE OF TWENTY.

Ewa Goes on Strike.

The plantation laborers at Ewa struck yesterday morning, every Japanese on the estate refusing to go to work when the whistle blew. The strike was decided upon at a meeting held Thursday night. The Japanese were more considerate on Ewa plantation than at Waipahu and Alea, for they finished up about all the cane that was on hand and the work at the mill. The laborers get more money at Ewa than at the other two estates, and it was hardly thought they would join the strikers. Their act is due to sympathy and to half a score of agitators who persisted in working the laborers up to going out. The committee which called upon Manager Renton was courteous. With reference to the Ewa strike, E. D. Tenney, president of Castle & Cooke, agents, made the following statement yesterday morning:

"Last evening about 8 o'clock a number of Japanese laborers of Ewa plantation from the lower camp, near Honolulu, held a meeting, and at 9 o'clock or thereabouts marched to the main village of the Japanese, near the mill, where another meeting was held to discuss labor matters in general and whether or not to strike in particular. The meeting at the mill village numbered about 800 men. These men decided that all Japanese should not work today, Friday, nor tomorrow, Saturday; that during that period their demands on the management would be formulated; that on Monday they would be presented to the manager; that on the same day, Monday, the Japanese laborers would return to work, pending an answer from the manager."

The meeting at the village near the mill was orderly. Following out the program as stated above, none of the Japanese at Ewa are working today, save a few in outlying camps or in the plantation stables."

May Return to Work.

Yesterday forenoon the statement came from Ewa that the strikers there contemplated a return to their work today. Even up to last evening Fred Makino said he was not certain whether the men would remain out or not. The agents thought they would not return until Monday at least. Something had been said by the men that they would "take a couple of days' holiday."

Sheriff to Waipahu.

Sheriff Jarrett went to Waipahu yesterday afternoon, accompanied by Interpreter Townsend. Word had reached the Sheriff that the Chinese laborers on the Waipahu estate had been threatened by the striking Japanese that they would be forced to quit work. The threats were of such a nature that the Chinese asked for protection and feared that when they returned last evening to camp that they might be attacked. A dozen men at Waipahu have already been commissioned as special officers, so that there should not be the necessity of sending any police from Honolulu. These men are under the control of Deputy Sheriff Fernandez of Ewa district.

Working at Alea.

The strike-breakers from Honolulu who were sent down to Alea plantation yesterday morning were set to work and much of the work dropped by the strikers was picked and carried on. These few hundred men will bring in the cane already cut, and cut that which needs the knife, and the grinding of it will continue today and tomorrow.

Denies He Got \$50.

Fred Makino laughed last evening when asked if it were true he had asked and received \$50 for making the trip to Waipahu to call the strike the other morning. "I don't care what is said about me, anyhow," he said. "We'll show all you people that we are it."

Over 5000 Men Out.

With three plantations tied up, it is estimated that about 5000 men are now out of employment.

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Monday, May 17,
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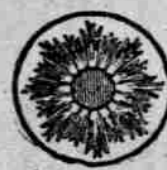
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